M.T.N.L.'s Proposal for Videotex and Voice Mail Services

698. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state ;

(a) whether the Mahanagar, Telephone Nigam Limited propose to introduce several new services like videotex, voice mail etc.; during the Eighth Five Year plan period ;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ;

(c) what are the details of allocations made for the said services during the Eighth Five Year Plan period ; and

(d) what is the extent to which the services of telephones would be increased as a result thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) Experimental Voice Mail system at exchange level are under implementation at Delhi and Bombay.

(ii) The experimental Videotex service is likely to have a maximum of 500 users and 50 Information Providers. The project is presently under installation and testing. On successful realization of the experimental project, the regular Videotex service will be considered, if commercially viable.

(c) The experimental Videotex project has a budgetary provision of Rs. 2.87 crores.

(d) It does not have a direct impact on the telephone service.

Foreign Open Tender Bids for Cellular Mobile Services

699. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a 4 member empowered committee had been set up to evaluate the foreign open tender bids for cellular mobile services ;

(b) if so, which were the bidders both foreign and Indians and what had been the technical evaluation of the bids ;

(c) what is the time it will take to operate this service ;

(d) what is Government's thinking about the invitation of open tenders from the private and foreign companies for other value added services like the videotext and electronic paging services ;

(e) what is the projected demand for cellular phones in the 4 metropolitan cities ;

(f) what is estimated capital outlay involved ; and

(g) the likely taric for these cellular mobile services ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. a 4 member Streeing committee has been nominated for final evaluation of the bids. The open tender floated by the Department was only for Indian Companies and 30 Indian Companies have submitted their bids. The Technical evaluation of the bids is not yet completed. The list of bidders is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) The time period allowed to operate this service after the award of Licence is one year.

(d) A proposal to invite tenders for franchising the electronic paging services to Indian Companies is under the consideration of the Government. The decision on other Value Added Services will be taken as and when they are planned.

(e) Though no market survey has been specifically conducted by the Department for this purpose, there is a potential demand for such service in the four metro cities.

(f) Since DOT has decided to franchise this service, no capital outlay from the DOT is envisaged.

(g) The tariff will be fixed by DOT at the time of award of the licence.